HIS MAJESTIES LETTER

To the Lords and others of his Privy Council.

JAMES R.

My Lords,

WHen we saw that it was no longer safe for us to remain within our Kingdom of *England*, and that thereupon we had taken our resolutions to withdraw for some time; we left to be communicated to you and to all our Subjects the Reasons of our withdrawing, and were likewise resolved at the same time to leave such Orders behind us to you of our Privy Council, as might best suite with the present State of Affairs; but that being altogether unsafe for us at that time, We now think fit to let you know, that tho it has been our constant Care since our first accession to the Crown to Govern our People with that Justice and Moderation, as to give, if possible, no occasion of Complaint; yet more particularly upon the late Invasion, seeing how the Design was laid, and fearing that our People, who could not be destroyed but by themselves, might by little imaginary Grievances be cheated into a certain Ruin: To prevent so great Mischief, and to take away not only all just Causes, but even Pretences of Discontent, we freely and of our own accord redressed all those things that were set forth as the Causes of that Invasion, and that we might be informed by the Counsel and Advice of our Subjects themselves, which way we might give them a further and a full Satisfaction, we resolved to meet them in a Free Parliament; and in order to it, we first laid the foundation of such a Free Parliament in restoring the City of *London* and the rest of the Corporations to their ancient Charters and Priviledges, and afterwards actually appointed the Writs to be issued out for the Parliaments meeting on the 15th of *January*. But the Prince of *Orange* seeing all the ends of his Declaration answered, the People beginning to be undeceived, and returning apace to their ancient Duty and Allegiance, and well fore-seeing that if the Parliament should meet at the time appointed, such a Settlement in all probability would be made both in Church and State, as would totally defeat his ambitious and unjust Designs; resolved by all means possible to prevent the meeting of the Parliament; and to do this the most effectual way, he thought fit to lay a Restraint on Our Royal Person; for as it were absurd to call that a Free Parliament where there is any force on either of the Houses, so much less can that Parliament be said to act freely, where the Sovereign, by whose Authority they meet and sit, and from whose Royal Assent all their Acts receive their Life and Sanction, is under actual Confinement. The hurrying of us under a Guard from our City of *London*, whose returning Loyalty he could no longer trust, and the other Indignities we suffered in the person of the Earl of *Feversham*, when sent to him by us, and in that barbarous Confinement of our own Person, we shall not here repeat, because they are, we doubt not, by this time very well known, and may, we hope, if enough considered and reflected upon, together with his other violations and breaches of the Laws and Liberties of *England*, which by this Invasion he pretended to restore, be sufficient to open the Eyes of all our Subjects, and let them plainly see what every one of them may expect, and what Treatment they shall find from him, if at any time it may serve his purpose, from whose hands a Sovereign Prince, an Uncle, and a Father could meet with no better Entertainment. However the sense of these Indignities and the just apprehension of further Attempts against our Person, by them who already endeavoured to murther our Reputation by infamous Calumnies (as if we had been capable of supposing a Prince of *Wales*) which was incomparably more injurious than the destroying of our Person it self, together with a serious reflection on a Saying of our Royal Father of blessed memory, when he was in the like circumstances, that *There is little distance between the Prisons and the Graves of Princes* (which afterwards proved too true in his Case) could not but perswade us to make use of that Right which the Law of Nature gives to the meanest of our Subjects, of freeing our selves by all means possible from that unjust Confinement and Restraint. And this we did not more for the Security of our own Person, than that thereby we might be in a better capacity of transacting and providing for every thing that may contribute to the Peace and Settlement of our Kingdoms: For as on the one hand no Change of Fortune shall ever make us forget our selves so far as to condescend to any thing unbecoming that high and Royal Station in which God Almighty by Right of Succession has placed us, so on the other hand, neither the Provocation or Ingratitude of our own Subjects, nor any other Consideration whatsoever shall ever prevail with us to make the least step contrary to the true Interest of the *English* Nation, which we ever did and ever must look upon as our own. Our Will and Pleasure therefore is, That you of our Privy Council take the most effectual care to make these our gracious Intentions known to the Lords Spiritual and Temporal in and about our Cities of *London* and *Westminster*, to the Lord Mayor and Commons of our City of *London*, and to all our Subjects in general, and to assure them that we desire nothing more than to return and hold a Free Parliament, wherein we may have the best opportunity of undeceiving our People, and shewing the Sincerity of those Protestations we have often made, of Preserving the Liberties and Properties of our Subjects and the Protestant Religion, more especially the Church of *England*, as by Law establish'd, with such Indulgence for those that dissent from her, as we have always thought our selves in Justice and Care of the general Welfare of our People bound to procure for them: And in the mean time, you of our Privy Council (who can judge better by being upon the place) are to send us your Advice, what is fit to be done by us towards our returning and the accomplishing these good Ends. And we do require you in our Name and by our Authority to endeavour so to suppress all Tumults and Disorders, that the Nation in general, and every one of our Subjects in particular, may receive the least Prejudice from the present Distractions that is possible. So not doubting of your dutiful Obedience to these our Royal Commands, we bid you heartily farewel. Given at S. *Germans en Laye* the $\frac{4}{14}$ *January* 168$\frac{8}{9}$. and of our Reign the Fourth Year.

By His Majesties Command,

MELFORT.

Directed thus,

To the Lords and others of our Privy-Council of our Kingdom of England.

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